

What is claimed is:

1. A hanger assembly for suspending an external store from an aircraft comprising:  
a band including an arcuate center panel having first and second ends, wherein the band further includes first and second arcuate side panels each having first and second ends, wherein the first end of the center panel is in hinged connection to the first end of the first side panel and the second end of the center panel is in hinged connection to the first end of the second panel, wherein the center panel includes an interface for engagement with an attachment mechanism of an aircraft, wherein the side panels are rotatable at the hinged connection to place the band in a substantially circular configuration where the second ends of the first and second panels face each other and are substantially diametrically opposed to the interface; and  
a fastening means for coupling the ends of the first and second panels to each other when the band is disposed in a substantially circular configuration, wherein the fastening means is adjustable to apply a predetermined radial loading to an external store substantially encircled by the band.
2. The hanger assembly of claim 1, wherein, when the hanger assembly is secured about the external store, the band has a longitudinal length, thickness and material strength sufficient to locate the maximum bending moment at a region of the band other than the region including the interface.
3. The hanger assembly of claim 2, wherein the band has a longitudinal length of between about 8 and 15 inches, where the maximum bending moment is located adjacent to an edge of the band.

4. The hanger assembly of claim 1, wherein the band has a longitudinal length of between about 8 and 15 inches.
5. The hanger assembly of claim 1, wherein the band has a thickness of between about 0.190 and 0.375 inches.
6. The hanger assembly of claim 1, wherein the band, the interface and the fastening means include high strength steel.
7. The hanger assembly of claim 1, wherein the center panel further defines an aperture through which a hardware interface can be established between the external store and the aircraft, and wherein, when the hanger assembly is secured about the external store, the band has a longitudinal length, thickness and material strength sufficient to locate the maximum bending moment at a region of the band other than the region defining the aperture.